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Napoleone I. e l'Inghilterra; Saggio sulle Origini del Blocco Continentale e sulle sue Conseguenze Economiche. By ALBERTO LUMBROSO. (Rome: Modes e Mendel. 1897. Pp. xvi, 514.)

THIS handsome volume is creditable both as a product of Italian scholarship and of the bookmaker's art in Italy. It is a pity that where paper and print combine with an excellent style to make a readable book, the proof of the abundant English quotations should in so many places have been but indifferently corrected. Otherwise the contents are as satisfactory as their garb. As the title indicates, the book is an essay, but it is an essay in investigation rather than in the discussion of facts and the expression of well-matured convictions. In truth, it would be difficult, after a rapid and superficial perusal, to say that the author has reached any definite positive conclusion but one, to wit, that the Continental System furnished the fuel for the European conflagration in which the Napoleonic power was destroyed. After marshalling the authorities in impressive array he reviews them with singular impartiality and concludes that while, on the one hand, many writers consider the Continental System as pregnant with important economic results, some contending that the effects were prejudicial to France, others that they were beneficent; on the other hand, quite as many and as important historians take a position diametrically opposed and declare that the system had no considerable economic consequences one way or the other. *Adhuc sub judice lis est* is his closing phrase. In other words, the volume belongs primarily to the class of "mémoires pour servir" and ought as such to have high value for the judicial historian; it strives to exemplify neither the "ad narrandum" nor the "ad probandum" theory of writing history. Yet it would be unjust to leave the impression that Lumbroso is merely an indefatigable antiquarian and chronicler, as his works so far published would seem to indicate: in particular his very extended and thorough *Bibliografia ragionata per servire alla Storia dell' Epoca Napoleonica*, of which five parts have already been published, and his equally valuable *Miscellanea Napoleonica*, of which the third series has just been issued. Even in these certain high qualities are apparent. He chooses and edits with judgment; he is fearless and impartial in publishing facts whatever bearing they may have on national pride and accepted national tradition; his short, concise estimates of the authorities are marked by insight and critical acumen. The great contributions to the history of the Napoleonic epoch which are still to be made will almost certainly be drawn from research in public and private collections outside of France, and probably in those which exist in lands over which French influence and power were once exercised. No one can do higher service in this direction than an intelligent Italian with a catholic spirit and a well-trained mind. It is to be hoped, therefore, that Lumbroso will persevere in the path he has marked out for himself.

But beyond all this the careful reader of the volume under consideration will discern between the lines no little capacity for weighing evi-

dence and will discover opinions far more important than the few which are expressed in plain language, finally laying down the book with the feeling that he has been led up by the arrangement of the facts to certain conclusions which the author considers so clear as to require no flat statement. This is in our opinion somewhat of a blemish, even in a collection of documents and excerpts. The material should either be arranged chronologically or else the juxtaposition should be justified. Every writer knows how difficult it is to express himself without stint of language and how often his words convey to others a meaning quite different from that which he intended to express. Life is short and art is long; the reader of historical works, even the expert, has his rights and one of them is a right to the plain statement of the writer's convictions, wherever a conviction is felt and indicated.

The author's method is good. Desiring to study the conflict between Napoleon and England from the economic point of view, he lays down the various definitions of blockade in such a way as to indicate that hereafter no civilized nation can ever declare any port blockaded except when it has the means and the intention to use a sufficient armed sea-power. By inference he utterly rejects the possibility of the pacific blockade, the paper blockade or blockade by cruising. The next chapter is designed to show the state of European politics during the ten years of armed peace from 1783 to 1793, a successful study of the latent germs of discord. The nations were so arrayed at the close of this period that the minor questions of the hour were all included in the comprehensive, vital decision between the claims to supremacy of Great Britain and of France. Either the latter must resign her conquests and be content with her royal frontiers or British power must be annihilated. This position is established by considering the evolution and spread of the new ideas of political economy. The author believes that Turgot's *Reflections* directly influenced Adam Smith and that but for the industrial revolution in Great Britain the latter, who was obscure and uninfluential, would never have had a hearing. He asserts that it was the reflex action of English opinion as determined by English conditions which transformed the attitude of Continental Europe in regard to political economy. British enterprise aimed at nothing less than commercial supremacy. To this portentous fact was due the French prohibitive tariff of 10 Brumaire, An V. How far such a measure was from shocking the most enlightened opinion of the Continent is shown by an analysis of Fichte's *Utopia*, *Der Geschlossene Handelsstaat*, a treatise which aims to show how antiquated is the notion that men may freely buy and sell wherever they choose in the known world. If European Christendom be a whole, then and then only the globe is but a single great commercial state, otherwise colonies and factories elsewhere are each and all included in the various nationalities to which they belong. Such being the theory of Continental thinkers the statesmen would certainly reduce it to practice in the interests of their various states. Great Britain must forestall them. The French tariff was a sample of what might be expected. Hence in logical sequence

the Orders in Council, the paper blockade of the shores opposite or near the shores of Britain and as a counter-stroke the Berlin and Milan Decrees of Napoleon. It is an interesting coincidence that the ideas of Napoleon, the practical politician, and Fichte, the theoretical speculator, which appear to have had a parallel genesis and evolution, should have found expression almost simultaneously; the methods of publication stand, to be sure, in picturesque contrast.

The non-intercourse acts of the United States are a portion of the same movement, and the author shows how Great Britain, as a consequence of her being shut out from the markets of Europe and North America, used her sea-power to seize the commerce of South America, Spain and the Indies, and how in fact she laid the foundation of her present greatness by the compulsory disregard of her former markets and the subsequent seizure of those which have proved vastly more important throughout the rest of the known world. The fluctuations of prosperity in the British Islands are traced with skill and attributed quite as much to the state of harvests, the existence of war on the Continent and various other causes as to the operations of the Continental System. An interesting account of the workings of "licenses" is also given. As to the effect of the Continental System on France herself the author heaps up facts and opinions, but he seems unable to reach a conclusion.

In considering a special study like this we are bound to note the danger lest author or reader should conclude that the *casus belli* of the epoch was purely economic. It is well to be reminded that economic influences played an important rôle, but for all that the comprehensive reason for the awful cataclysms which followed the French Revolution and the still later upheavals of the Napoleonic period was political in a narrow sense. The absolutist, dynastic concept of the state, so long considered as the only possible one, was endangered by the movement of liberal ideas. Throughout the armed peace the safety of their thrones and the preservation of their dynastic prestige were far more important considerations to George III., to Frederic William, to Francis and the whole race of hereditary monarchs than disinterested consideration for the welfare of their respective peoples. To this day we cannot be absolutely sure in any single instance as to the immediate, concrete, tangible cause of the different wars between 1793 and 1815. It is possible but not likely that in time the archives of other nations may give us these causes; it is the conviction of many who have ransacked the French archives that either the direct statements of Napoleon's motives in the various instances were never written or else that they have been destroyed. The former alternative is probably the true one. Public business is conducted with at least as much personal contact and shrewd secretiveness as are private affairs. The records of a clever merchant mean much to him, but very little to outsiders or successors. It is not, therefore, presumptuous to decide that conclusions based on the present state of knowledge have some validity and that the breaches of the public peace throughout Napoleon's time were due immediately quite as much to his

adversaries as to himself. It was simply his brilliant forehandedness which gave him the appearance of being the aggressor. The wars themselves were terrible and bloody, the waste of human energy was appalling ; but dynastic politics, like slavery or any other shameful anachronism which blocks the development of human society, perishes only in hideous convulsions. The economic question, however insistent and broad, was not the *primum mobile* of the Napoleonic epoch.

By way of illuminating his subject, Lumbroso gives in the second portion of his book a series of monographs on French finances, on smuggling and contraband, on Napoleon's self-justification, and on the effects of the system in Scandinavia, Russia, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Spain, Italy and America. These are all well done and for the specialist they were worth doing. The substance of the whole matter is that the Orders in Council and the Berlin Decree were alike measures of desperation, influencing the final results of the European struggle little or not at all.

This excellent book concludes with an appendix of original documents which occupy a hundred pages and a very interesting bibliography extending over about forty more. The volume may be recommended to the student with little or no reserve. As was remarked at the beginning, its plan gives it a patchy appearance, and the author would be styled by the general reader a compiler with a passion for *inedita*. But this is after all only appearance, and the *Saggio* is a true historical essay as well as an original contribution to the subject.

Histoire Politique de l'Europe Contemporaine ; Évolution des Partis et des Formes politiques. 1814-1896. Par CH. SEIGNOBOS, Maître de Conférences à la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Paris. (Paris : Armand Colin et Cie. 1897. Pp. xii, 800.)

"THE greatest obstacle in the way of him who would write the history of the nineteenth century," says Professor Seignobos in his preface, "is the immense number of documents. The strict historical method calls for the direct study of sources. But the life of a man would not suffice—I do not say to study and criticise—but to *read* the official documents of even a single European country. It is, therefore, materially impossible to write a contemporaneous history of Europe in conformity with the principles of the critical method."

Consequently, in order to avoid this difficulty, Professor Seignobos has adopted a course which, though logically more imperfect than the correct method, "is more practical and suffices for the attainment of at least a part of historical truth." As the facts of contemporary political history are exposed in monographs, special works and annuals, all written at first hand, Professor Seignobos considers that abstracts from, and analyses of, the documents contained in these works are reliable enough to dispense one, ordinarily, from the necessity of going to the original sources of information.